

Common Advice Performance Management Reporting Framework 2017/18 Annual Report



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Money and Welfare Rights Advice in Scotland

Who accesses advice?

94,336 new clients



51% have a disability

55% have a household
income less than
£10,000

25% are in employment

How much debt do clients owe?

£204m

Local authority investment

£25.76 million in 2017/18



486 FTE paid internal staff

386 FTE paid external staff

412 FTE volunteers

Rent arrears are driving people to seek advice



25% increase
in those seeking
advice due to
rent arrears

How do people access advice?



60%



32%



7%



1%

The return on investment

£21-24

secured for
clients per every
£1 invested by
local authorities



Executive Summary

The Common Advice Performance Management Reporting Framework (CAPMRF) provides all Scottish local authorities with a mechanism to report consistently in relation to the resources they provide to deliver money and welfare rights advice services. It enables them, both individually and collectively, to evidence the results of their investment.

Whilst ownership of the CAPMRF rests with local authorities, it is supported and facilitated by the Improvement Service and additional funding is provided by the Money Advice Service and Scottish Government.¹

At stakeholder sessions held in November and December 17, and subsequent discussions with several local authorities, there was broad agreement that the previous money advice performance management reporting Framework (MAPMRF) should be adapted to include welfare rights advice. Following the decision to include welfare rights advice in this fourth iteration of Framework, with the exception of the specific indicators that measure outputs and outcomes that relate only to money advice, it is no longer possible to make comparisons with previous years' data. However, future annual overview reports will be able to track trends across all indicators.

It was accepted the expansion of the Framework would impact on the ability to consider trend data but it was felt that this would be outweighed by the longer-term benefits offered through more rounded and accurate reporting. The shift towards generic working and a reduction in funding allocated specifically for money advice services had meant that many local authorities found reporting separately on money advice increasingly challenging.

There is compelling evidence that money and welfare rights advice services are used by those individuals experiencing the greatest social and economic inequality. This can be demonstrated by the demographic make-up of the clients they serve. In particular, a disproportionate percentage of service users have a disability, are members of minority ethnic groups, or live in a low-income household.

Demand for money advice services continues to grow and whilst the total amount of debt reported may be similar to that of the previous year, the number of debts individuals have is increasing. The number of individuals seeking advice as a result of rent arrears and council tax has increased by 24% and 8 % respectively. Clearly, if this trend continues, it will have an increasingly adverse effect on local authority income.

Investment by local authorities in money and welfare rights advice represents good value for money and improves the financial position of the poorest and most vulnerable members of communities.

The key findings for 2017/18 are as follows:



Every £1 invested in money and welfare rights advice provision by local authorities in Scotland provides financial gains of £21-24 for clients.²

1 Money Advice Service until 31 December 2018 and, thereafter, the Scottish Government until March 2019.

2 Using the figures provided for verified financial gain, there is a return on each £1 invested of £21. If the figures submitted for unverified gain are included this increases to a return of £24. The same process was used to determine the return on every £1 invested in previous years.

- 94,336 new service users accessed money and welfare rights advice.
- 60% of service clients initially made contact face-to-face, followed by 32% who made contact via telephone, 7% via email, and 1% via the web. Relative to the previous year, this represents a reduction in initial access by face to face and an increase in telephone.
- Investment by local authorities in money and welfare rights money advice services was £25.76m.
- 85 external and 32 internal money³ and welfare rights advice services received funding from local authorities.
- Local authorities had 486 FTE paid staff members, whilst external organisations supported by councils employed 386 FTE paid staff members. The service is also supported in external organisations by 412 FTE volunteers.
- 28% of service users had a disposable household income of less than £6,000, 55% less than £10,000 and 88% less than £20,000 - the median household disposable income in the UK is £27,300.⁴
- 66% of service users lived in rented accommodation.
- 38% of service users were permanently sick or disabled or suffering from a short-term illness or injury.
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups are disproportionately more likely to access money and welfare rights advice services.
- 25% of service users were in some form of employment and 11% were unemployed and seeking work.
- The total debt owed by service users was c£204m, a slight decrease on the previous year (<1%).
- 24% of service users initially sought advice because of rent arrears.
- Service users reported a positive impact in relation to their physical health, optimism, and relationships with others.
- The total financial gain secured for service users was £624.7m.

This report has summarised the significant contribution made by local authority funded and delivered money and welfare rights advice. The report highlights that councils invest over £25.76m p.a. in this vital area. Councils' investment in this area is also crucial in leveraging in additional resources from a range of external funders. The data returns submitted by councils demonstrate that advice services are effectively targeting many of the poorest and most vulnerable groups and individuals within Scotland. The analysis indicates that every £1 invested in advice services by Scotland's local authorities, results in net additional benefit of between £21 - £24. By any measure, this represents an exceptionally good use of public funding. However, despite this overwhelmingly positive story on the contribution made by advice services, the evidence also highlights that these services remain vulnerable and potentially susceptible to further cuts.

3 It should be noted some local authorities do not fund an internal service and others have more than one such service.

4 www.ons.gov.uk

A man with grey hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is leaning over a desk, looking down at a document. A woman with brown hair, wearing a light purple top, is sitting at the desk, looking at a laptop. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office setting with large windows. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the center-right of the image.

Despite compelling evidence of the contribution, they make to supporting multiple service user outcomes, future investment in money and welfare rights advice services is by no means secure.

Background

The financial position of local authorities in Scotland continues to be challenging and remains one of meeting rising demands with reducing resources. In the last five years, the Scottish Government contribution to local government budgets has reduced in real terms by 4%.⁵ Whilst this impacts on all services, it has a disproportionate impact on those services that are not ‘protected’ by policy priority or statutory requirement.

“Savings can only be made to 42% of the budget. Scottish Government policies continue to protect 58% of the available budget which exacerbates the problem and actually means[that] an 8% cut = 20% cut to the unprotected part of the budget.”⁶

As a ‘non-protected’, yet essential service, this will have a significant impact on funding for the provision of advice services. Whilst a statutory duty on local authorities to provide advice services is contained in several pieces of legislation,⁷ precisely how this duty should be exercised is not defined and, as a result, there remain wide variations in the amounts invested by local authorities in advice provision and the type of service delivered. These facts mean that any direct comparison of delivery and performance between councils requires to be understood with reference to these individual circumstances. Whilst it is essential to recognise that the needs of each area, and how best to meet them, must be determined at a local level, it may be helpful to collectively agree a minimum standard.

The figures provided by local authorities for 2017-18 include investment in both money and welfare rights advice and hence it is not possible to produce evidence of any changes in budgetary provision. The returns for this year will set the benchmark from which changes in levels of funding in future years can be assessed.

Although attention is often focussed on the level of investment by local authorities in advice services, it should be noted that the investment they provide, in the main to support core services, often enables funding from other sources to be secured. This represents an additional 12% over and above what local authorities invest. In short, the council investment in this important area also serves to lever in further, additional resources.

The multiple benefits advice offers

The significant contribution access to advice can make to reducing poverty and income inequality⁸ continues to be recognised and features as a key element in many local authority ‘Fairness Commissions’⁹ and anti-poverty strategies.

In recognition of the role advice on income maximisation can make to reducing levels of Child

5 http://www.cosla.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/fairfundingforessentialservices2019-20v2_1.pdf

6 Ibid above

7 Bankruptcy and Diligence (Scotland) Act 2007, Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

8 https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Reducing-poverty-reviews-FULL_0.pdf

9 Irvine Gail; *The Role of Fairness Commissions in the Enabling State* Carnegie UK Trust

Poverty, there is a statutory requirement on local authorities and health boards to ensure that this support is available to defined priority groups.¹⁰ Local authorities and NHS Boards now have a new duty to produce Local Child Poverty Action Reports, which outline actions they have taken and plan to take in the future to alleviate child poverty. In future iterations of this Framework, it is hoped to adjust the demographic data that is collected to help facilitate this process.

Despite compelling evidence of the contribution, they make to supporting multiple service user outcomes, future investment in money and welfare rights advice services is by no means secure. Funding of advice services is subject to ongoing review at both local and national levels.¹¹

The 2017-18 CAPMRF highlights the significant financial gains that investment delivers, between £21 and £24 for each £1 Invested. It should be stressed that these gains are, in the main, achieved for the most socially and economically excluded individuals. Whilst financial gain offers clear economic benefits to individuals and increases the amount they have to spend in their local communities, access to advice also offers many other positive outcomes. Although monitoring softer outcomes using the CAPMRF is still at an early stage, there is already evidence that individuals experience improved wellbeing, less stress, are able to make more effective decisions and have better money management skills. This illustrates that advice services not only offer immediate assistance at times of crises, but also contribute to outcomes that, in the longer term, will build capacity, improve resilience and provide sustainability.

Meeting the needs of service users

Advice services are well used by many of the poorest individuals in communities, including those in work, in receipt of benefits or retired. Data returned for the CAPMRF 2017-18 suggests that 25% of service users of money advice services are in some form of employment and that a little over half have an annual income of less than £10,000. Across Scotland, the data returns suggest that those who sought advice services in 2017-18 had debts amounting to c £204 million, a very slight decrease on previous years.

The extension of zero hours contracts, reductions in the value of benefits as a result of the freeze until 2020, the roll out of universal credit and increases in the cost of living are all factors that are contributing to increased demand for advice services.¹² As greater numbers of individuals are seeking to access them, there is evidence that services are struggling to cope. Research by the Money Advice Service suggests that, as a result of a large growth in the over-indebted¹³ population in Scotland, there is significant unmet need.¹⁴ (i.e. people who would likely benefit from advice services but who do not currently access such services).

In terms of who is currently accessing the service, single adults under 65 and single parents are accessing the service disproportionately better than other demographic groups. 45% of service users are single adults under 65, yet this group make up 20%¹⁵ of the population. Likewise, 14% of single parents are service users, yet they make up only 5% of the population. Interestingly, older

10 Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

11 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/money_advice/LA-commissioning-advice-services.pdf

12 OBR (2018) THE Economy Forecast: <https://www.publicpolicy.cam.ac.uk/zero-hours-contracts>

13 Over-indebted individuals are defined as people that say they find keeping up with their bills and credit commitments a 'heavy burden', or that they have missed payments for bills and/or credit commitments in three or more of the last six months.

14 https://Mapping_the_unmet_demand_for_debt_advice_in_the_UK.pdf

15 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-people-annual-report-results-2017-scottish-household-survey/pages/3/>

pensioners (over 65) and living alone account for 3% of service users but comprise 14% of the population. This illustrates how advice services are effectively targeting one key demographic group - single parents – but also indicates that if other priority groups – for example, single pensioners living alone – are to be targeted more effectively, then different approaches may be required.

In relation to advice services, local authorities have taken account of the recommendations of Audit Scotland,¹⁶ and are actively introducing new models of service delivery that meet user needs and improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Whilst there will always be a need for face to face services, there is evidence from the data returns that this form of making initial contact is reducing and alternative approaches are increasing. With greater emphasis on digital inclusion,¹⁷ local authorities and advice providers are taking a more proactive approach to offering different ways to access services, which include digital methods.

An integral part of improving access to advice services is reviewing how face to face services are delivered. Different methods of delivering services, in community settings, schools, health centres and job centres, are being offered with the aim of improving user engagement and encouraging earlier intervention.

The IS has carried out research on different models for accessing and delivering advice services and the findings will be published in January 2019.

Future development of the Framework

A balance has to be struck between minimising alterations to the Framework so that it provides a consistent basis for reporting and enables timeous arrangements to be made by local authorities for data collection, and adopting and refining it to reflect new activities and to enable it to continue to provide information that is useful. As data is collected retrospectively, it can take at least a year for adjustments in data collection to be made after any amendments are agreed. The Framework is used by several local authorities to set the reporting requirements for funded organisations so time lags are inevitable. The case management system that organisations use and its ability to be customised is critical in facilitating this process.

There were significant additions to the data requested for the 2017-18 CAPMRF, with the inclusion of indicators for welfare rights advice and the introduction of measures for softer outcomes. Both these alterations were made at the request of the overwhelming majority of local authorities. Whilst discussions continue with the Scottish Government to develop a shared approach to measuring the impact of publicly funded advice services, it is intended that further changes are likely to be limited.

Key to the success of the Framework is that the information collected is proportionate and serves a clear purpose. The Framework is currently used for several purposes including: making the case for investment; evaluation; benchmarking and identifying good practice. As the data reported improves in quality and consistency, the latter areas of use will become even more relevant. The intention going forward is to focus on using the data more effectively to identify areas of good practice and to disseminate the findings through briefing papers.

By way of illustration, an initial analysis of the data returns suggests that there are wide variations in the outcome of benefit claims. For example, an initial award is made as a result of 35% of

¹⁶ Local Government in Scotland- Performance and Challenges 2017

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/realising-scotlands-full-potential-digital-world-digital-strategy-scotland>

claims for Universal credit, 66% of claims for Personal Independence Payment and 91% of claims for Attendance Allowance. The reasons for these variations and their relationship to constituent authorities could be investigated further.

Further potential areas of research will be highlighted and discussions will take place with stakeholders to identify which could be used to highlight examples of effective practice to drive improvements.

Conclusion

The 2017-18 CAPMRF overview report, alongside individual reports for each constituent local authority, provide information about the state of money and welfare rights advice services in Scotland. Whilst this year it has not been possible to identify trends, as was the case in previous years, the extension of the Framework will improve the quality of the information collected and reduce the need for caveats in future iterations.

The report provides compelling evidence that money and welfare rights advice services are increasingly used by those in greatest need, make significant improvements to the lives of the most vulnerable members of communities and offer an excellent return on investment. In any consideration of the costs of investment in advice services and the contribution they make to alleviating poverty it is perhaps opportune to consider the costs of failing to do so.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston stated that, *“the many billions advertised as having been extracted from the benefits system since 2010 have been offset by the additional resources required to fund emergency services.”*

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that the impact and cost of poverty accounts for £1 in every £5 spent on public services and the effects of poverty costs the public purse £78bn a year, or £1,200 for every person in the UK.¹⁸

¹⁸ <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/counting-cost-uk-poverty>

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Analysis of Data Returns

This section of the report outlines the Scotland-wide findings from the analysis of the data submitted by all 32 local authorities that funded money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18. Due to this year's expansion of the Framework to include welfare rights advice, comparisons can only be made with previous years' data for the specific indicators that measure outputs and outcomes that relate only to money advice. Future CAPMRF annual reports will track trends across all indicators.

When submitting data, local authorities were asked to provide information in relation to five categories: 'Context', 'Input', 'Activity', 'Output' and 'Outcome'. All local authorities received a copy of the Indicator Guide¹⁹ which explained, in detail, the indicators relating to each of the identified categories and the supporting data that should be collected. See Table 1 below for the list of indicators included in the CAPMRF.

Table 1: List of CAPMRF Indicators

Type of Indicator	Indicator
Context	C1 – money and welfare rights advice services and case management system/s
	C2 – number of clients per demographic measure
	C3 – amount, number, and type of debts owed by client
Input	I1 – number of FTE staff
	I2 - funding
Activity	A1.1 – volume
	A1.2 – breakdown of contacts by channel
	A1.3 – number of referrals
	A1.4 – reason for initial contact
	A1.5 – number of open and closed SNSIAP ²⁰ cases
Output	OP1 – breakdown of debt strategy agreed with client
	OP2 – number of claims submitted and awards made/ maintained for each type of welfare benefit
	OP3 – number of welfare benefit claims that resulted in mandatory reconsiderations and appeals, and their outcome
Outcome	OC1 – verified and unverified financial gain
	OC2 – improved health and wellbeing
	OC3 – improved capacity and ability to cope
	OC4 – increased financial stability and resilience

The data received from each local authority in Scotland, upon which this analysis is based, is publicly available in the form of individual reports on the Improvement Service website.

19 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/money_advice/MAPMF/CAPMF201718-indicator-guide.docx

20 Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers

All 32 local authorities in Scotland provide either in-house money and welfare rights advice or fund an external provider to deliver these services or indeed, do both. Data about these services, upon which this report is based, was submitted by all local authorities on a voluntary basis in relation to the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018.

Several caveats apply to the data supplied for 2017/18. Those that are most significant are considered further below.

Data reporting was impacted significantly by updates to the case management system used by the majority of externally-funded Citizen's Advice Bureaux (CABx), CASTLE, prior to the release of a new version in October 2017. Constructive discussions with Citizen's Advice Scotland (CAS) in relation to how best to address this issue have taken place on a regular basis and are ongoing. It is expected that full CABx reporting capability will be restored for the 2018/19 CAPMRF data collection period.

Three local authorities were only able to submit relatively limited data returns due to reporting difficulties. Additionally, one local authority could not submit any data in relation to welfare rights advice clients. These issues stemmed primarily from the limitations of particular case management systems, meaning that services could not appropriately record the data requested. Additionally, mid-year changes to some systems, such as the CASTLE example discussed above, also affected recording.

Incomplete information has been provided in relation to many indicators. This often occurs, again, where some services cannot record the data in the format defined in the Indicator Guide. These gaps are identified where they exist in the analysis and must be considered when interpreting the findings. It should be noted that they are generally likely to contribute to underestimations of the workload and impact of the services.

Previous iterations of the Framework²¹ occasionally included welfare rights advice data. This stemmed from the close cooperation between money and welfare rights advisors, which often saw data recorded across multiple systems. When this was discovered in later iterations, the figures were adjusted to present a more accurate picture. Due to the integration of welfare rights advice from this iteration onwards, we should expect the figures provided for each indicator to adhere more stringently to the definitions set out in the Indicator Guide.

As has been the case in prior iterations of the CAPMRF, it is expected that the number of local authorities reporting on each indicator, as well as the accuracy of the data provided, will increase markedly year-on-year. This happens as a result of the commitment of local authorities, and their funded services, to adjust their reporting systems in line with the Framework. As the development of the CAPMRF is an iterative process, the IS will continue to host annual reviews in partnership with local authorities. This process arises from a shared desire to evidence performance and achieve a clear, reliable and consistent reporting methodology.

Context Indicators

The context indicators are used to provide information about the money advice services in each local authority area, as well as the clients who use them. These indicators are used to improve understanding of the complexities surrounding the delivery of money and welfare rights advice across local authorities in Scotland. Demographic information also enables identification of the groups accessing advice and allows for monitoring of trends and targeting of services.

²¹ When known as the Money Advice Performance Management Framework (MAPMF).

C1 – Number of Money and Welfare Rights Advice Services and Case Management Systems

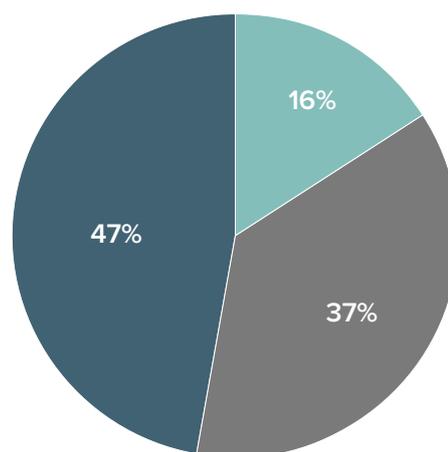
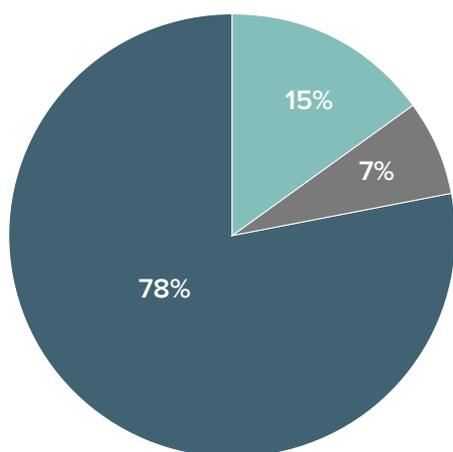
Number of Money and Welfare Rights Advice Services

For the first time, local authorities were asked to report on both the number of money and welfare rights advice services funded in 2017/18. All 32 local authorities reported on this measure, with the data showing that a total of 85 external and 32 internal money and welfare rights advice services were funded by local authorities in 2017/18. All local authorities provided funding for at least one service, whether internal or external. Three local authorities funded internal services only, while six funded external services only. The remaining 23 provided funding for both in-house and external services.

As illustrated by Graphs C1.1 and C1.2, 78% of external services were funded to provide both money and welfare rights advice. On the other hand, 47% of internal services provided both types of advice, while 37% provided welfare rights advice only.

Graph C1.1 Types of External Money and Welfare Rights Advice Services in 2017/18

Graph C1.2: Types of Internal Money and Welfare Rights Advice Services in 2017/18



Money Advice
 Welfare Advice
 Combined
 Money Advice
 Welfare Advice
 Combined

Case Management Systems

The majority of services funded by local authorities reported using multiple case management systems in 2017/18. This is because each funded service, whether delivering money or welfare rights advice, will commonly use a different system to other services funded within the same local authority area. As outlined in Table C1.1, the most common system was CASTLE, as it was used in 21 local authority areas. This is unsurprising as CASTLE is used by the majority of CABx, which commonly receive funding from local authorities to deliver advice. The second most popular system, which was used in 11 local authorities, was AdvicePro. The third most popular was MACS, which was used in seven local authorities. Following MACS, five local authorities reported that their services used PG Debt. It should be noted that PG Debt is no longer being maintained by its developer, who has advised users to switch to another system. We would therefore expect that the services using that system will decrease over time. Four local authorities also reported that their services use the social care system SWIFT, while two reported that BrightOffice was used.

Several other systems were also reported, such as Money Matters, FORT, CARS OpenVision and MAFICS. Each of these systems were reported to be in use in one local authority and were designed on a bespoke basis. In total, there are 50 different case management systems in use across the 32 councils, thereby highlighting that some councils use multiple systems.

Table C1.1: Most Common Case Management Systems Reported to be in Use in 2017/18

Rank	Case Management System	Number of Local Authorities Reporting Use
1	CASTLE	21
2	AdvicePro	11
3	MACS	7
4	PG Debt	5
5	SWIFT	4
6	BrightOffice	2

Gathering this information will allow for the facilitation of knowledge-sharing across local authorities, particularly in relation to the customisation of case management systems for the purposes of recording and reporting relevant data for the CAPMRF and funders.

C2 - Demographics

This section provides information on the demographics of clients accessing money and welfare rights advice services. It can be used to identify which groups are accessing these services and will also be used to monitor trends. As this is the first year in which the CAPMRF has recorded welfare rights advice, demographic data cannot be compared to previous iterations of the Framework.

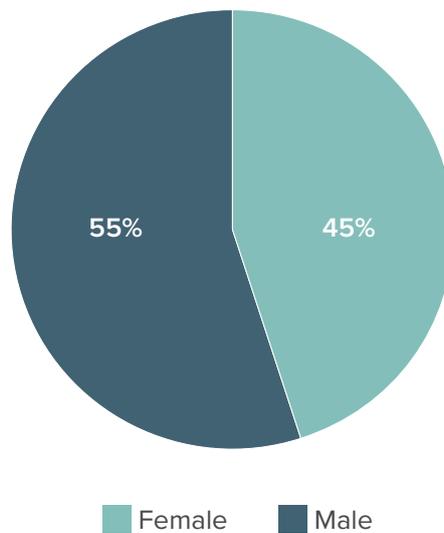
In a few cases, the total number of clients recorded under each demographic measure did not equalise. While the effect of this was marginal, as the difference between the totals was very small relative to their overall size, it does suggest that demographic information may not be recorded consistently for all clients in some local authorities. It should also be noted that with the introduction of welfare rights advice, there has been a significant increase in the use of the 'Not Recorded' category. It is expected that this will reduce as services adjust their recording systems. For the purposes of the analysis, the 'Not Recorded' category has been excluded.

Gender

The returns suggest that, across the 29 local authorities that reported on this measure, 55% of clients accessing money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 were female, while 45% were male (see Graph C2.1).²² As would be expected, due to significant overlap of clients between money and welfare rights advice, this finding is consistent with data collected in previous iterations of the Framework.

²² Excludes 18% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

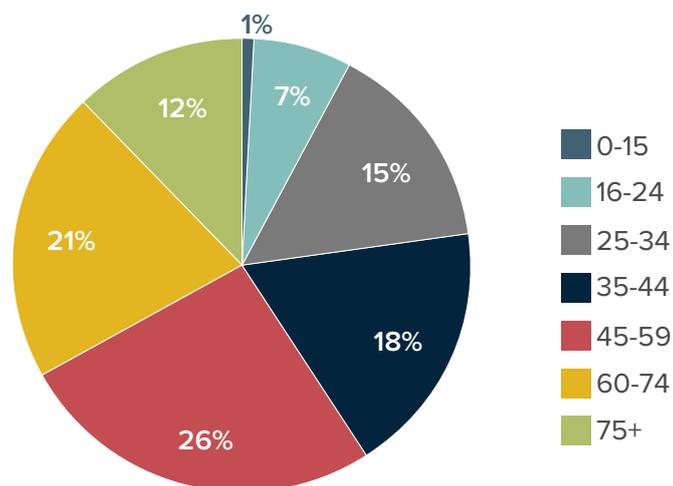
Graph C2.1 Clients by Gender in 2017/18



Age

As illustrated by Graph C2.2, data submitted by 28 local authorities suggests that people aged between 45-59 years were most likely to access money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18. Individuals in this age bracket made up 26% of clients.²³ This was followed by those aged between 60-74 years (21%) and people aged 35-44 years (18%). Almost a half of all clients accessing advice services are over 45. Unsurprisingly, clients aged between 0-15 years were the least likely to access money and welfare rights advice, representing only 1% of clients in 2017/18.

Graph C2.2 Clients per Age Bracket in 2017/18



Ethnicity

The definition and categorisation of ethnicity is based on those used by the Scottish Household Survey.²⁴ These categories have been summarised into seven key groupings (see Table C2.1 below).²⁵

²³ Excludes 24% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

²⁴ Scottish Government, 'Scottish Household Survey,' 2018

²⁵ Does not include the seventh category, representing those for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

The returns suggest that, across the 28 local authorities that reported on this measure, the vast majority of people accessing money and welfare rights advice in 2017/18 were those from the 'White' ethnic group (93%).²⁶ Those identifying as Caribbean or Black made up the smallest ethnic group accessing money advice, representing only 0.9% of users. However, the Scottish Household Survey data below demonstrates that, while the percentage of clients from other ethnic groups accessing money and welfare rights advice is low when compared to the 'White' group, 95.6% of the Scottish population is 'White'. It also suggests that those from mixed or multiple ethnic groups are disproportionately more likely to be money and welfare rights advice service clients, when accounting for the ethnic make-up of the Scottish population. Africans and other ethnic groups are proportionately represented. While individuals identifying as Asian are less likely to access advice.

Table C2.1: Breakdown of the Scottish Population and Money Advice Clients by Ethnicity in 2017/18

	White	Any Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group	Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	African	Caribbean or Black	Other Ethnic Group
Money Advice Service Users	93%	2%	2%	0.4%	0.9%	1%
Scotland Population*	95.6%	0.2%	2.6%	0.5%	0.1%	0.9%

The successful engagement of advice services with Black and Minority Ethnic individuals has been explored further in a case study on Glasgow City Council.²⁷

Disability or Long-Term Condition

As shown in Graph C2.3, data submitted by 27 local authorities suggests that just over half (51%) of those accessing money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 had a disability or long-term condition.²⁸ To set this finding in context, around 22% of the Scottish population report having a disability or long-term health issue.²⁹ This highlights the fact that money and welfare rights advice services effectively engage with citizens who have disabilities or other long-term conditions.

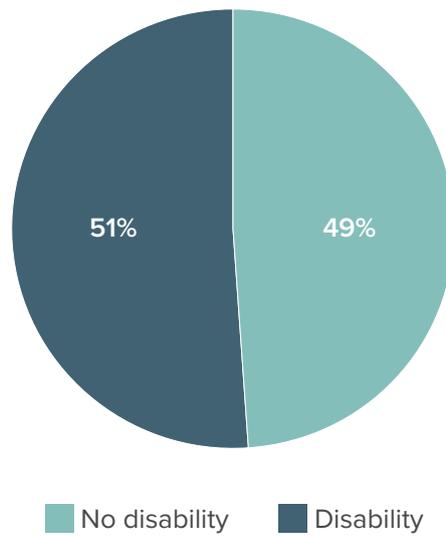
26 Excludes 31% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

27 Improvement Service, '[Money Advice Service Engagement with BME Communities in Glasgow](#),' 2017

28 Excludes 17% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

29 Scottish Government, '[Scottish Household Survey](#),' 2018

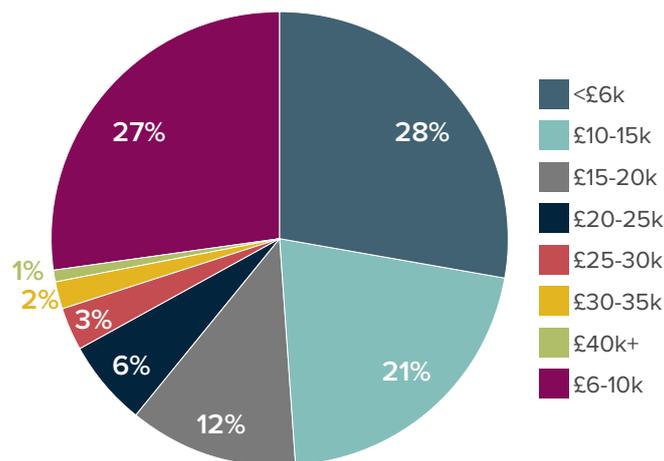
Graph C2.3 Clients with a Disability or Long-Term Condition in 2017/18



Household Income

Data submitted by 25 local authorities suggests that 28% of clients accessing money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 had a household income of less than £6,000, 55% less than £10,000 and 88% less than £20,000.³⁰ The full breakdown of clients by household income bracket in 2017/18 is outlined in Graph C2.4. To place this in context, the median household disposable income in the UK was £27,300 at the end of the 2017 financial year.³¹ This finding highlights that money and welfare rights advice services effectively target those living on the lowest incomes.

Graph C2.4 Clients by Household Income Bracket in 2017/18



Economic Status

Data submitted by 27 local authorities shows that 41% of clients accessing money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 were employed or permanently retired from work, compared to 38% who were permanently sick or disabled or suffering from a short-term illness or injury, and 11% who were

³⁰ Excludes 47% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

³¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/bulletins/householddisposableincomeandinequality/financialyearending2017>

unemployed and seeking work.³² The full breakdown of the economic status of clients is shown in Table C2.2. These figures highlight that almost a quarter of those seeking advice from money and welfare rights advice services were in some form of employment.

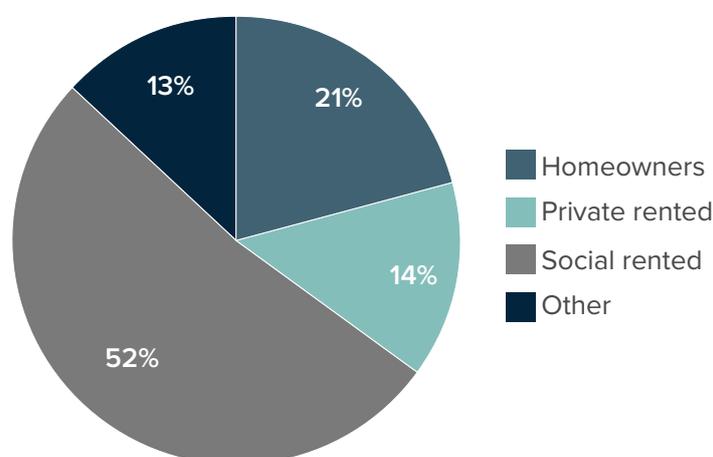
Table C2.2: Percentage of Clients per Economic Status Category in 2017/18

Rank	Economic Status	Percentage of clients
1	Permanently sick or disabled or have a short-term illness or injury	38%
2	Permanently retired from work	15%
3	Employed full-time	13%
4	Unemployed and seeking work	11%
5	Employed part-time	10%
6	Looking after the home or family	5%
7	Other	3%
8	Self-employed	2%
9	In further education	1%
10	At school	0.9%
11	Government work or training scheme	0.1%

Housing Tenure

As shown in Graph C2.5, data submitted by 28 local authorities suggests that over half of those who accessed money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 lived in social-rented accommodation (52%).³³ This was followed by 21% who were home owners, 14% lived in the private-rented sector, and 13% were recorded under the 'Other' category. Those recorded under the 'Other' category includes clients who were homeless and those who were temporarily living with family or friends.

Graph C2.5 Clients by Housing Tenure in 2017/18



³² Excludes 40% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

³³ Excludes 38% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

Household Composition

As can be seen in Table C2.3, in terms of household composition, the largest group of clients who accessed money and welfare rights advice in 2017/18 was single adults (45%).³⁴ The second largest group was adult families made up of at least two adults and no children (18%). This was followed by single parents (14%) and families with two adults and at least one child (14%). As can be seen by table C2.3 below, the data suggests that advice and welfare services specifically target single adult and single parent households.

Table C2.3: Percentage of Clients by Household Composition in 2017/18

Rank	Household Composition ³⁵	Percentage of Clients	Scotland Population*
1	Single adult	45%	20%
2	Adult family (two or more adults and no children)	18%	19%
3	Single parent	14%	5%
4	Family (two adults and one or more children)	14%	18%
5	Older adult family (containing at least one pensioner)	6%	n/a ³⁶
6	Single pensioner	3%	14%

C3 – Debt Owed

For the past three iterations of the Framework, local authorities were asked to submit a breakdown of the number of clients and amount owed per category of debt (of which there are 11). Based on data submitted by 27 local authorities, the total amount of debt owed by clients accessing money advice in 2017/18 was £204m. It is worth highlighting that three local authorities indicated that the figures submitted for debt owed were incomplete, as they excluded data from one or more service. Another local authority commented that their internal debt team had reduced significantly and was unable to take on many new clients in 2017/18, which they believe is reflected in the figure recorded.

The 2017/18 total represents a £13m decrease in comparison to 2016/17, when 29 local authorities reported. 14 of the 26 local authorities that submitted data for both years saw a decline in the total amount of debt owed by clients. On the other hand, 12 reported that the total debt owed had increased. It is therefore difficult to draw any strong conclusions in terms of a trend between the two years, particularly when considering that two fewer local authorities reported in 2017/18. It is also notable that the majority of the decrease is attributable to the £11m decrease in debt reported under the 'Other' category. Reported debts in this category include business debt, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), National Insurance debt, fines and legal expenses.

Looking to earlier iterations of the Framework, total debt owed increased by £2m between 2015/16 and 2016/17. However, an additional local authority reported on the measure in 2016/17, which likely accounts for this increase.

The variation in the total amount of debt owed by money and welfare rights advice clients from

³⁴ Excludes 36% of clients for whom this was 'Not Recorded'.

³⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-people-annual-report-results-2017-scottish-household-survey/pages/3/>

³⁶ The 'older adult family' category does not correspond with those measured by the Scottish Household Survey.

2015/16 to 2017/18 is shown in Graph C3 below.

Graph C3: Total Debt Owed 2015-2018



The full breakdown of the number of clients who owe certain types of debt, and the amount owed, can be seen in Table C3 below. The table also shows how these figures have changed between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Table C3: Debt Owed by Number of Clients and Amount of Debt in 2017/18

Rank in 2017/18	Type of Debt	No. Clients in 2017/16	Change in No. Clients since 2016/17 (% Change)	Change in Debt Owed since 2016/17 (% Change)	Amount of Debt Owed in 2017/18	Type of Debt	Rank in 2017/18
1	Credit, Store and Charge Card Debt	8246	+1150 (14%)	−£1.7m (4%)	£39m	Credit, Store and Charge Card Debt	1
2	Council Tax Arrears	7413	+573 (8%)	+£0.6m (2%)	£30.4m	Mortgage Arrears	2
3	Unsecured Personal Loan	5349	+818 (15%)	+£2.6m (9%)	£30.1m	Unsecured Personal Loan	3
4	Rent Arrears	5136	+1242 (24%)	+£1m (5%)	£21.8m	Council Tax Arrears	4
5	Utility Arrears	4581	+849 (18%)	+£0.8m (9%)	£9.4m	Rent Arrears	5
6	Benefit Overpayment	3689	+244 (7%)	−£1.2m (13%)	£9.3m	Benefit Overpayment	6
7	Catalogue Debt	3310	+418 (13%)	−£2m (38%)	£5.3m	Bank and Building Society Overdrafts	7
8	Bank and Building Society Overdrafts	3124	+227 (7%)	−£1m (23%)	£4.4m	Catalogue Debt	8

Rank in 2017/18	Type of Debt	No. Clients in 2017/16	Change in No. Clients since 2016/17 (% Change)	Change in Debt Owed since 2016/17 (% Change)	Amount of Debt Owed in 2017/18	Type of Debt	Rank in 2017/18
9	Payday Loan Arrears	2980	+701 (24%)	+0.4m (10%)	£4m	Payday Loan Arrears	9
10	Mortgage Arrears	1394	+234 (17%)	+0.8m (22%)	£3.6m	Utility Arrears	10
11	Rent-to-Own Debt	669	-8 (1%)	-£0.7m (23%)	£3m	Rent-to-Own Debt	11
-	Other	9014	+883 (10%)	-£11m (25%)	£43.7m	Other	-

20 local authorities reported on the number of clients in debt under each category in 2017/18. The most common types, aside from those recorded under 'Other' were credit, store and charge card debt (which 15% of clients owed), council tax arrears (14%), unsecured personal loans (10%), rent arrears (8%), utility arrears (8%), and benefit overpayment (7%). These proportions are very similar to those reported in 2016/17, when the same number of local authorities reported. However, it is notable that Table C3 shows that the number of clients in debt across all debt types except rent-to-own increased. This would suggest that whilst the amount of debt outstanding may be fairly similar, more individuals are seeking assistance from advice services. Whether this is a result of improved and earlier access to advice services, creditors taking recovery action at an earlier stage or some other factor is not known.

25 local authorities broke the total amount of debt owed by clients down by debt category for 2017/18. As shown in Table OC3, the types of debt for which the largest amount was owed, aside from those recorded under 'Other', were credit, store and charge cards (which represented 19% of debt owed), mortgage arrears (15%), unsecured personal loans (15%), and council tax arrears (11%). These percentages are consistent with those reported by 29 local authorities in 2016/17. Relatively small fluctuations have been reported in terms of the amount of debt owed across most of the debt types. However, as mentioned earlier, it is notable that there has been a £11m decrease in the amount of debt reported under the 'Other' category. Furthermore, reported debts in this category include business debt, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and National Insurance debt, fines, and legal expenses.

According to the data submitted, credit, store and charge card debt was therefore the most common type of debt in 2017/18, in terms of both the number of clients who owe it and the amount owed. Council tax arrears and unsecured personal loans were also very common.

As seen in previous iterations of the CAPMRF, a significant amount of debt was owed to local authorities in 2017/18. This consists of £21.8m in council tax arrears, as well as a significant portion of the £9.4m owed in rent arrears and £9.3m in benefit overpayments. The number of individuals seeking advice as a result of rent arrears rose by c25%. Supporting money and welfare rights advice services is therefore in the interest of local authorities, due to the beneficial impact the services can have on their income streams.

Input Indicators

The input indicators are used to provide information on the levels of investment that local authorities make in money and welfare rights advice services. This is considered in terms of both financial resources and staffing levels.

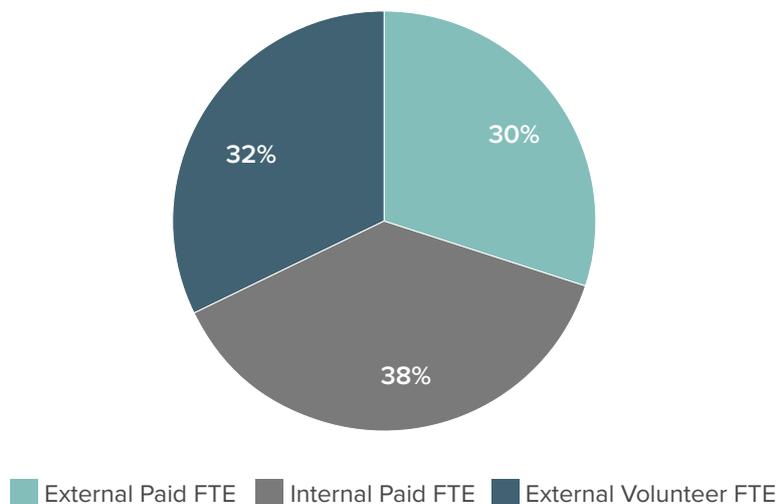
I1 – Staff and Volunteers

Local authorities were asked to provide the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members, including those providing administrative support, who were involved in the delivery of money and welfare rights advice in the 2017/18 financial year. Detailed information on how to apportion figures for time spent by staff providing money and welfare advice – where they worked in a generalist advice environment, worked part-time or were employed on a temporary basis - was also provided. Local authorities were asked to submit data, where applicable, for both in-house and externally funded staff members.

The data submitted indicates that 486 FTE internal paid staff members and 386 FTE external paid staff members were employed by money and welfare advice services in 2017/18. External services also employed 412 FTE volunteers.

While all local authorities submitted data for this measure, it should be noted that several highlighted that this was incomplete regarding the number of external paid staff and volunteers. Therefore, the figures presented here are likely to underestimate the number of paid staff and volunteers that work in external money and welfare rights advice services.

Graph C2.6 FTE Paid and Voluntary Staff Members Employed by Money and Welfare Rights Advice Services in 2017/18



I2 – Funding

Local Authority Funding

Local authorities were asked to submit their total annual investment in the delivery of money and welfare rights advice in 2017/18, including direct overheads.

Total local authority investment in money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 was £25.76m. This figure includes data submitted by all 32 local authorities. 24 local authorities reported funding in-house services to a total of £13.93m, while 28 reported that they funded external services to a total of £11.83m. These breakdowns are shown below in Graph C2.7.

Graph C2.7 Local Authority Investment in Money and Welfare Rights Advice in 2017/18



Local authorities were also asked to report on investment received by money and welfare rights advice services from other sources. Based on data submitted by 23 local authorities, a total of £3,493,330 was secured from other sources in 2017/18. As can be seen in Table I2, the Scottish Legal Aid Board provided the highest amount of the reported funding, followed by 'Other' sources of funding, then the European Social Fund. Though a reporting category was not included in the CAPMRF, as shown in Table I2, Macmillan Cancer Support also provided a significant amount of funding to money and welfare rights advice services.

Table I2: Funding Received from Other Sources in 2017/18

Rank	Source of Funding	Scotland-wide Amount
1	Scottish Legal Aid Board ³⁷	£1,529,249
2	Other	£885,863
3	European Social Fund	£517,349
4	Macmillan Cancer Support	£258,643
5	Scottish Government	£257,467
6	Big Lottery Fund	£44,759

These findings indicate that local authority investment in money and welfare rights advice services often results in additional funding being levered in from other sources. Without the initial local authority investment, it is likely that some of this additional investment would not be secured. These figures indicate that funding from other sources represents an additional 12% over and above what local authorities invest.

Activity Indicators

The activity indicators provide an overview of the volume of clients and cases that money and welfare rights advice services have dealt with over the financial year.

³⁷ SLAB funded 7 projects directly through local authorities in 17/18 and they received £615,470. Total spend on grant funding across all programmes was £4.8million

A1 – Volume

Local authorities were asked to submit data on the number of contacts and clients that money and welfare rights advice services dealt with in 2017/18. A ‘contact’ is defined as an enquiry from a person seeking information on a money or welfare rights advice matter. They become a ‘new client’ if the service takes some form of action to support the individual or resolve their issue. In addition, further information was requested on the number of Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers³⁸ Type I, II and III cases that were open and closed. This allowed the action taken following the initial enquiry and the complexity of any resultant case to be identified.

Information was also requested on clients’ reasons for making initial contact with the service, as this will allow the issues driving individuals to seek money and welfare rights advice to be identified. Local authorities were also asked to provide a breakdown of the number of contacts the services receive by each channel (i.e. face-to-face, telephone, etc.). Reporting on this measure provides an overview of the channels through which people access money and welfare rights advice in Scotland, as well as assisting with tracking of any channel shift in future years. Additionally, local authorities were asked to report on the number of referrals the services receive from different sectors, which will allow for identification of strong referral pathways.

Contacts

The returns suggest that a total of 222,530 contacts were made to money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 across the 24 local authorities which submitted data for this indicator. However, it should be noted that five of those local authorities indicated that their figures underestimated the demand for the services. Primarily, this was due to the CASTLE system changes discussed earlier, meaning that some submitted figures excluded contacts received by CABx.

Total and New Clients

The returns show that 94,336 new clients accessed money and welfare rights advice in 2017/18 across the 24 local authorities that submitted data on this measure. Local authorities were also requested to submit information on the total number of clients who accessed advice, which includes both new clients and clients whose support has continued from the previous financial year. According to the data returns, the total number of clients in 2017/18 was 161,428, based on figures submitted by 26 local authorities.

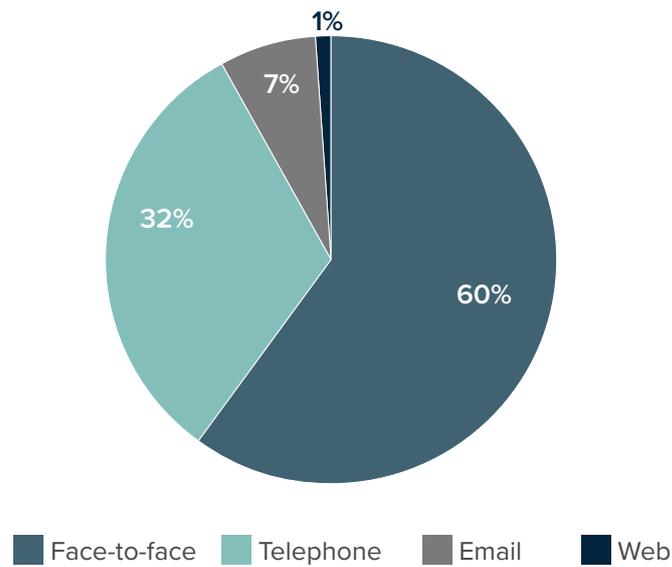
It should be highlighted that nine of the local authorities reporting on these indicators suggested that the submitted figures were incomplete and therefore not fully accurate. Again, this tended to stem from changes to the CASTLE case management system, as well as a couple of internal services also switching systems throughout the year.

Contacts by Channel

The returns suggest that 60% of clients initially contacted money and welfare rights advice services face-to-face in 2017/18, followed by 32% who made contact via telephone, 7% via email, and 1% via the web. This breakdown by channel can be seen in Graph A1. Data on the channels used to contact money and welfare rights services was submitted by 25 local authorities. Seven of these local authorities advised that the data submitted was not fully accurate due to changes made to case management systems.

38 Scottish Government, ‘[Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers: A Quality Assurance Framework 2009](#),’ 2009

Graph A1: Contacts by Channel in 2017/18



Referrals to Money Advice Services

A total of 119,688 referrals were made to money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 across the 24 local authorities that submitted data for this indicator. For 2017/18, referrals were further broken down into eight recording categories.

As can be seen in Table A1.3, the submitted data suggests that 56% of referrals made to money and welfare rights advice services in 2017/18 were self-referrals. This category was added for the 2017/18 iteration of the CAPMRF, as a large proportion of local authorities had highlighted service users often made direct initial contact with the service, without intervention from other agencies. The second most common category was 'Other Local Authority Referrals' (12%), which constitute referrals made by other local authority departments that do not have their own reporting category. Additionally, 9% of referrals came from Primary Healthcare, 6% from Social Care and 4% from the Third Sector. A small percentage of referrals were also made from local authorities' Revenues, Housing and Employability departments.

Table A1.3: Percentage of Referrals per Category in 2017/18

Rank	Referral Category	Number of Referrals	Percentage of Total
1	Self-referral	67,313	56%
3	Other Local Authority Referrals	14,060	12%
4	Health	11,179	9%
2	Other	9,722	8%
5	Social Care	6,933	6%
6	Third Sector	4,679	4%
7	Local Authority Revenues	1,946	2%
8	Local Authority Housing	2,924	2%
9	Local Authority Employability	932	1%

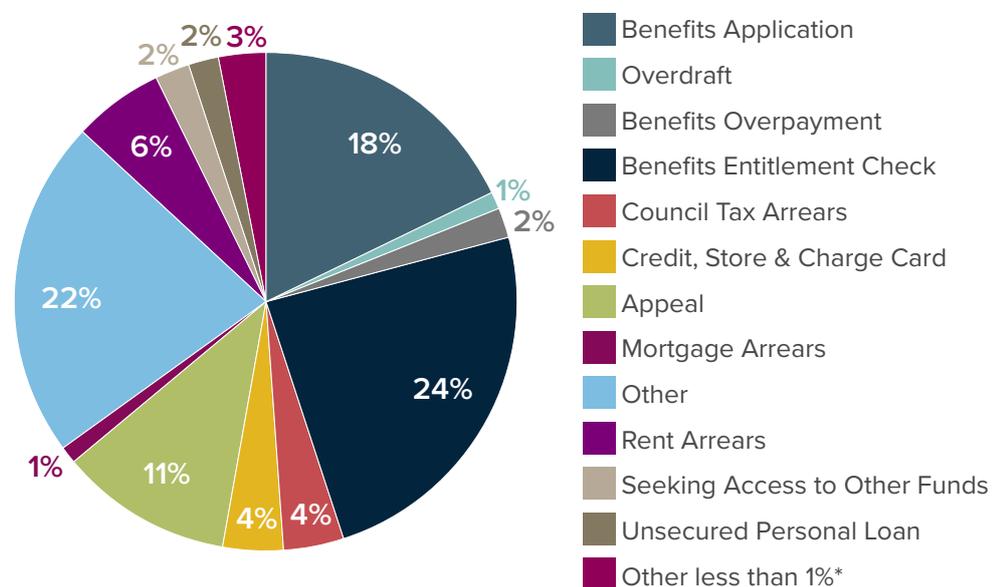
First Reason for Contact

This indicator was introduced to enable identification of the issues driving individuals towards money and welfare rights advice. While only 13 local authorities were able to submit data on the first reason for contact, reporting is expected to increase year-on-year.

As suggested in Graph A1.2, the main drivers for seeking money and welfare rights advice in 2017/18 were benefits entitlement checks (which represented 24% of reasons cited), benefits applications (18%), appealing a decision (11%), and rent arrears (6%). Reasons categorised as 'Other' (22%) included having a low income and facing eviction, among others.

It is acknowledged that this represents the first reason for contacting the service and may well result in other types of support being offered and accessed.

Graph A1.2: First Reason for Contact in 2017/18



*'Other less than 1%' includes Sanctioned, PPI, Payday Loan, Right to Reside and Catalogue Debt.

SNSIAP Open & Closed Cases

The Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers (SNSIAP) provides the following definitions for categories or types of assistance:

- Type I – Active Information, Sign-posting and Explanation
- Type II – Casework
- Type III – Advocacy, Representation and Mediation at Tribunal or Court Action Level

Data is collected on this indicator in order to better understand the nature of work being undertaken by money and welfare rights advice services in Scotland.

Table A1.4 outlines the number of open and closed SNISAP cases, separated by type, as well as the number of local authorities that submitted data in relation to each. It should be noted that reporting on this area is likely to improve as money and welfare rights advice services seek accreditation under the new SNSIAP model,³⁹ and therefore will be recording this information.

39 http://www.slab.org.uk/providers/advice/Accreditation_Model.html

Table A1.4: Breakdown of SNSIAP Type I, II and III Activity in 2017/18

		Type I	Type II	Type III
		17/18	17/18	17/18
Open	Scotland total	3,959	27,117	7,505
	Average	330	1,427	536
	Number who Submitted	12	19	14
Closed	Scotland total	9,796	33,046	4,877
	Average	754	1,835	375
	Number who Submitted	13	18	13
Total		13,755	60,163	12,382

Some local authorities indicated that they were only able to submit partial figures in relation to this indicator. It is likely that this will contribute to under-estimation of the number of cases across all types in 2017/18. Given that increased numbers of organisations are seeking accreditation in relation to the standards it is likely the reporting position will improve.

Output Indicators

The output indicators show what action has occurred and measure the results of specific types of advice. In relation to money advice, 'debt strategy chosen' is used to measure output. For welfare advice, the number of claims and awards made for each welfare benefit, as well as the number of claims that result in mandatory reconsiderations and appeals are used. Submission of a mandatory reconsideration requires the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to review their initial decision on a client's welfare benefit claim. Then, if the client disagrees with the DWP's decision, an appeal can be submitted. This involves presenting the case to an independent tribunal. The outcome of both mandatory reconsiderations and appeals are measured in the CAPMRF.

OP1 – Debt Strategy

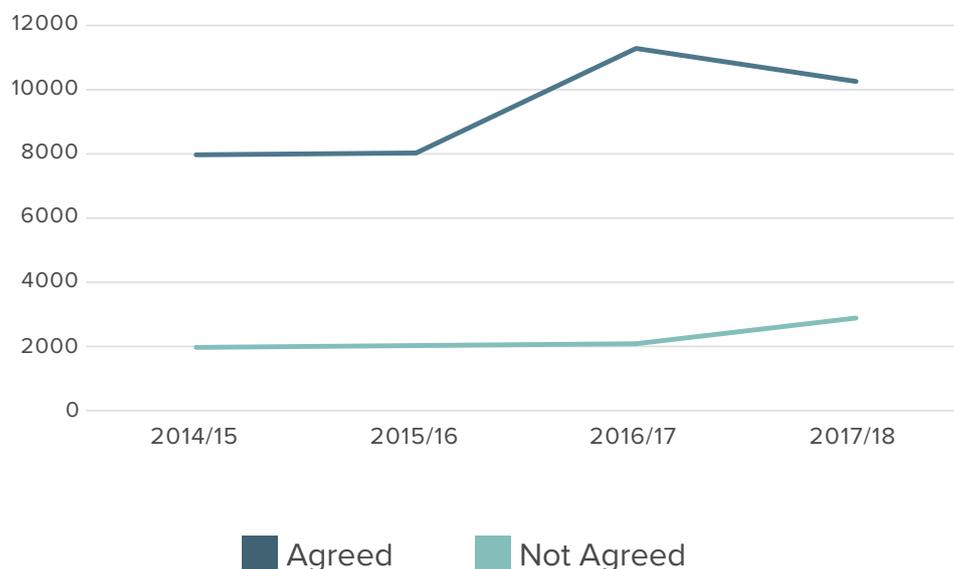
For the Debt Strategy indicator, local authorities were asked to provide a breakdown of the particular debt strategies that clients used, the number of times a strategy was not agreed, and where the outcome of discussions was not yet known. A debt strategy is a method by which clients manage their debt. Some strategies are known as 'formal debt solutions' and are controlled by the Accountant in Bankruptcy (e.g. the Debt Arrangement Scheme and Sequestration). The debt strategies for which data is collected for the CAPMRF reflect the most commonly-used options in Scotland. An extra category of 'Other' was included for any other strategies that were not on this list. Since the 2015/16 iteration of the Framework, reporting has included clients agreeing to nil payments/offers, consolidation loans and mortgage-to-rent debt strategies. Previously in the 2014/15 iteration, these were recorded under 'Other'. This evolution of the reporting categories means that it is difficult to accurately compare the total number of debt strategies agreed since 2014/15.

According to the 27 local authorities that reported on this indicator, 10,239 debt strategies were agreed in 2017/18. Overall, this represents a decrease of around 9% in comparison to 2016/17, when 30 local authorities reported that 11,268 debt strategies were agreed. It should be noted that three fewer local authorities submitted data in 2017/18. Seven local authorities also advised that the data submitted in 2017/18 was not wholly accurate due to the inability of some services to report on the indicator. Of the 25 local authorities that reported across the two years, 19 reported a decrease in debt strategies agreed, while six reported an increase. This supports the case for a decreasing trend between the two years, in contrast to previous reporting. This trend is also reflected by data collected by the Accountant in Bankruptcy in relation to statutory debt solutions.⁴⁰ Of the 28 local authorities that reported across 2015/16 and 2016/17, 17 reported an increase in debt strategies agreed, while 11 reported a decrease.

The number of debt strategies not agreed increased slightly to represent 16% of debt strategy outputs in 2017/18. In 2016/17, it represented 13% of debt strategy outputs, and 16% in 2015/16. Of the 21 local authorities that reported across both 2016/17 and 2017/18, 14 reported an increase in the number of debt strategies not agreed. Similarly, between 2015/16 and 2016/17, most local authorities reported an increase. These findings indicate that the number of debt strategies not agreed has generally increased across the last three years of recording.

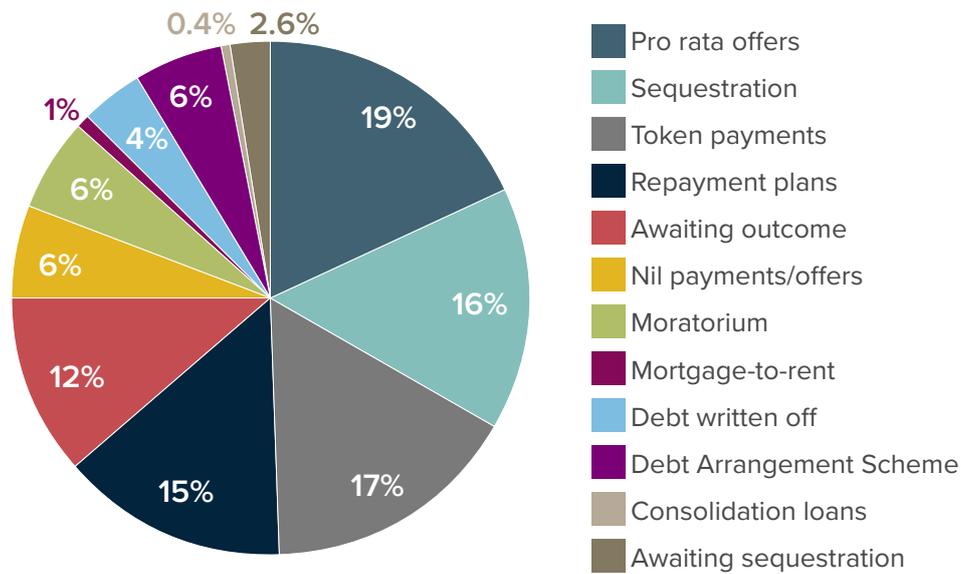
Changes in the number of debt strategies agreed, as well as those not agreed, since the first iteration of the Framework are shown in Graph OP1.1.

Graph OP1.1: Number of Debt Strategies Agreed and Not Agreed 2014/15-2017/18



As shown in Graph OP1.2, the most popular debt strategies pursued in 2017/18 were pro rata offers (19%), sequestration (16%), token payments (15%), and repayment plans (15%). In comparison to 2016/17, pro rata offers decreased in popularity, down from 27% of all debt strategies agreed. Repayment plans' popularity also declined by 5% as a proportion of debt strategies agreed. The proportion of token payments and sequestrations remained constant, however.

⁴⁰ <https://www.aib.gov.uk/scottish-insolvency-statistics-january-march-2018-2017-18-quarter-4>



Graph OP1.2: Debt Strategies Agreed in 2017/18

OP 2 and 3 – Welfare Benefit Claims, Awards, Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals

As part of the integration of welfare rights advice into the CAPMRF, several indicators were introduced for the 2017/18 iteration. Local authorities were asked to report on the number of claims and subsequent awards made or maintained for each welfare benefit. They were also asked to report on the number of welfare benefit claims that resulted in mandatory reconsiderations (MRs) and then appeals, as well as their outcome.

The total number of welfare benefit claims submitted in 2017/18 was 55,725. This figure is based on 20 local authorities reporting on the indicator. Subsequently, 20 local authorities reported that 39,493 awards were made or maintained. As shown in Table OP2-3, the most popular benefits for which claims and awards were made were Personal Independence Payment, followed by Employment Support Allowance, then Attendance Allowance. It is worth noting that eight local authorities suggested that the data submitted for the number of claims and awards made was incomplete, as not all funded services were able to provide figures. Additionally, not all local authorities submitted figures in relation to all welfare benefits listed.

19 local authorities reported that 7,662 claims resulted in MRs, while 23 reported that 9,685 claims resulted in an appeal. We would expect that the number of MRs would be greater than the number of appeals due to the requirement to submit a MR before appealing. However, several local authorities advised that they did not record MRs, while they did record appeals. Of these appeals, 22 local authorities reported that 5,591 were won, while 21 local authorities reported that 3,121 were lost. Again, it is worth noting that seven local authorities indicated that the figures submitted in relation to MRs and appeals were partial due to the exclusion of several funded services that could not provide figures.

As this is the first time that data has been requested in relation to welfare rights advice, trend identification is not possible. However, it is interesting to note that an initial award is made as a

result of 35% of claims for Universal credit, 66% of claims for Personal Independence Payment and 91% of claims for Attendance Allowance. The data reported will be analysed further to identify areas of good practice and a subsequent briefing paper produced in February 2019.

Table OP2-3: Number of Claims, Awards, Mandatory Reconsiderations (MRs), Appeals, and Outputs by Welfare Benefit in 2017/18⁴¹

Welfare Benefit	No. Claims	No. Awards	No. MRs	No. Appeals	No. MRs and Appeals Won	No. MRs and Appeals Lost
Personal Independence Payment	11,765	7,837	2,457	4,646	2,474	1,516
Employment Support Allowance	7,808	4,853	2,788	4,073	2,407	1,204
Attendance Allowance	5,158	4,707	202	45	65	35
Scottish Welfare Fund	1,803	1,280	58	4	10	11
Disability Living Allowance	1,720	1,259	271	337	163	137
Pension Credit	1,594	1,518	65	10	24	10
Universal Credit	1,541	543	349	78	36	31
Carers Allowance	1,395	1,190	16	5	6	3
Discretionary Housing Payments	915	773	30	4	3	0
Child Tax Credit	600	483	160	31	28	25
Child Benefit	307	237	38	10	4	0
State Pension	220	128	2	0	1	0
Bereavement Benefits	124	81	1	3	0	2
Contributory Benefits	108	230	33	17	10	1
Severe Disablement Allowance	67	5	10	9	7	1
Industrial Injuries	53	5	18	19	5	10
Funeral Expenses	44	30	4	6	1	0
Sure Start Maternity Grant (replaced by Best Start Grant)	40	24	1	1	0	1
Maternity Allowance	39	26	43	10	0	0

41 Sorted from highest to lowest based on the number of claims made.

Welfare Benefit	No. Claims	No. Awards	No. MRs	No. Appeals	No. MRs and Appeals Won	No. MRs and Appeals Lost
Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Payments	29	20	1	0	1	0
Other	20,395	14,264	1,115	377	346	134
TOTAL	55,725	39,493	7,662	9,685	5,591	3,121

Outcome Indicators

The outcome indicators describe the benefits experienced by clients who have received support from money and welfare rights advice services. In previous iterations of the CAPMRF, the financial gain secured for clients has been used to indicate the impact of these services. For many years, staff members working in money and welfare rights advice services have highlighted that the 'softer' outcomes delivered by the services they provide make the greatest difference to their clients' lives. Consequentially, from 2017/18 onwards, services are attempting to measure their impact on clients' health and wellbeing, capacity, and financial resilience.

Services measure this 'softer' impact by asking clients during their final advice session whether they agree or disagree with set statements, with the aim of identifying changes they have experienced as a direct result of receiving advice. While the number of local authorities reporting on these outcomes was low in relation to 2017/18, several have indicated that they intend to implement recording mechanisms prior to the next iteration of the CAPMRF. Therefore, as with all indicators, it is expected that the number of local authorities reporting will increase year-on-year.

OC1 – Verified and Unverified Financial Gain

Local authorities were asked to provide the total financial gain generated for all clients which resulted from accessing support from money and welfare rights advice services. This includes any income to which clients were entitled but would not have received without the intervention of the service (including awards of benefits/tax credits, refunds, debts written off and grants accessed). In the case of benefits and tax credits, it is assumed that the award was made for a 12-month period.

Table OC1 details the financial gain associated with awards made and maintained for each welfare benefit. Data on the financial gain secured by awards made was submitted by 22 local authorities, while figures on the financial gain secured following MR and appeal were submitted by 19. It should be noted that seven local authorities indicated that the figures submitted were not wholly accurate as they did not include data from all funded services in the area.

As shown, the total financial gain resulting from welfare benefit awards in 2017/18, including those secured via MRs and appeals, was £221.2m. The majority of this relates to benefits associated with age or disability.

Table OC1: Financial Gain from Welfare Benefit Awards and MRs/Appeals in 2017/18

Welfare Benefit	Financial Gain from Awards	Financial Gain from MRs and Appeals
Disability Living Allowance	£5,551,809	£1,119,251

Welfare Benefit	Financial Gain from Awards	Financial Gain from MRs and Appeals
Personal Independence Payment	£63,143,269	£14,103,398
Attendance Allowance	£18,330,956	£584,332
Severe Disablement Allowance	£280,720	£78,313
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	£19,030	£12,878.81
Carers Allowance	£2,888,922	£65,003
Sure Start Maternity Grant (replaced by Best Start Grant)	£40,148	£0
Employment Support Allowance	£29,695,875	£14,167,381
Funeral Expenses	£47,948	£584
Scottish Welfare Fund	£1,055,087	£10,237
Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Payments	£11,670	£200
Discretionary Housing Payments	£796,242	£89,541
Universal Credit	£2,460,408	£333,571
Contributory Benefits	£1,194,341	£293,650
Child Benefit	£36,397	£36,355
Child Tax Credit	£2,823,786	£400,645.
Maternity Allowance	£162,140	£0
State Pension	£898,329	£77,576
Pension Credit	£5,688,937	£171,245
Bereavement Benefits	£444,002	£5,600
Other	£52,638,347	£1,471,74
TOTAL	£188,208,372	£33,021,510

27 local authorities also reported on the financial gain secured from other welfare rights benefits not covered by the indicators included in the CAPMRF. This measure also included any money advice-related gains, such as debt written off. It is intended to add additional categories for money advice gains in future iterations. This financial gain totalled £403.5m in 2017/18, constituted by £317.7m in verified financial gain across 25 local authorities and £85.8m in unverified financial gain across 6 local authorities.

Therefore, the total financial gain secured, including that secured via welfare benefit awards and any other money advice-related gains, was £624.7m in 2017/18. Based on these figures, every £1 invested in money and welfare rights advice provision by local authorities in Scotland translated to financial gains of £21-24 for clients.⁴²

42 Calculated by dividing total financial gain by total local authority investment. This is presented as a range as there is a £21 return when only verified gain is included, while there is a £24 return if both verified and unverified gain is included.

This represents an excellent return on investment and provides significant financial benefits to both individuals and local communities.

It should be noted that the client financial gain discussed in this report relates solely to that secured via money and welfare rights advice services that are delivered directly or funded by local authorities. The benefits provided by advice services that are supported through other funding streams - of which there are several - have not been taken into account. Therefore, the total benefits resulting from the work of all such services in Scotland are likely to be significantly greater than those outlined in this report.

OC2 - Improved Health and Wellbeing

Local authorities were asked to submit data on the number of clients self-reporting improved health and wellbeing as a direct result of getting advice. As shown in Table OC2, clients reported a significant positive impact due to their engagement with advice services across the five statement areas. Most notably, 1,154 clients reported that they'd been feeling more relaxed since receiving advice and 1,390 said that they were feeling better about themselves. While the number of clients sampled in relation to the remaining three statements were lower, many still reported positive impact in relation to their physical health, optimism, and relationships with others.

Table OC2: Number of Clients Self-Reporting Improved Health and Wellbeing in 2017/18

Statement	No. Clients that Agreed	No. Clients that Disagreed	No. Local Authorities That Reported
I've been feeling more relaxed	1,154	0	3
I've been feeling physically better	177	89	3
I've been feeling better about myself	1,390	20	3
I've been feeling more optimistic about the future	285	15	2
I've been getting on better with others	185	10	2

OC3 - Improved Capacity and Ability to Cope

Local authorities were also asked to submit data on the number of clients self-reporting improved capacity and ability to cope as a direct result of getting advice. As shown in Table OC3, clients said that receiving advice resulted in improvements across the five statement areas. 1,277 clients reported that they felt better able to make decisions, while 433 said that they now knew when and where to seek support if they have any problems in the future. Additionally, significant numbers of clients experienced positive impact on their ability to think more clearly, to gain control over their life, and cope with any problems they encounter in their daily lives.

Table OC3: Number of Clients Self-Reporting Improved Capacity and Ability to Cope in 2017/18

Statement	No. Clients that Agreed	No. Clients that Disagreed	No. Local Authorities That Reported
I am thinking more clearly	295	5	2
I feel more in control of my life	300	0	2

Statement	No. Clients that Agreed	No. Clients that Disagreed	No. Local Authorities That Reported
I am more able to make decisions	1,277	14	3
I am more able to cope with day to day issues/problems	281	19	2
I know when to seek support and where to get it	433	0	3

OC4 - Increased Financial Stability and Resilience

Local authorities were also asked to submit data on the number of clients self-reporting improved financial stability and resilience as a direct result of getting advice. As shown in Table OC4, again, advice clients reported experiencing significant improvements across all five statement areas. Importantly, 1,303 clients said that they can now better manage their money. 300 clients also reported that they now recognise when they need help to cope financially. Additionally, those accessing advice experienced improvements in knowing how much money they have to spend, coping with unexpected expenses, and confidence that they are getting the benefits and help to which they are entitled.

Table OC4: Number of Clients Self-Reporting Improved Financial Stability and Resilience in 2017/18

Statement	No. Clients that Agreed	No. Clients that Disagreed	No. Local Authorities That Reported
I recognise when I need help to sort out my money	300	0	2
I am confident that I am getting all the benefits/help to which I am legally entitled	294	16	2
I know how much money I have to spend	290	10	2
I can better manage my money	1,303	6	4
I would be better able to cope if I had an unexpected expense	147	17	1

A man with dark hair, wearing a grey and black patterned sweater, is shown in profile from the chest up, looking down at an ATM. He is holding a card in the machine. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a bank or a public service center, with shelves and other people visible in the distance. The lighting is soft and natural.

*... every £1 invested
in advice services
by Scotland's local
authorities, results
in net additional
benefit of between
£21 - £24*

Conclusion

This report has summarised the significant contribution made by local authority funded and delivered money and welfare rights advice. It highlights that council investment of over £25.6m p.a., whilst delivering multiple benefits per se, is crucial in leveraging in additional resources from a range of external providers. Councils' investment in this area is also crucial in leveraging in additional resources from a range of external funders. The data returns submitted by councils demonstrate that advice services are effectively targeting many of the poorest and most vulnerable groups and individuals within Scotland. The analysis indicates that every £1 invested in advice services by Scotland's local authorities, results in net additional benefit of between £21 - £24. By any measure, this represents an exceptionally good use of public funding. However, despite this overwhelmingly positive story on the contribution made by advice services, the evidence also highlights that these services remain vulnerable and potentially susceptible to further cuts.

As noted earlier, while the number of local authorities reporting on client feedback on these statements is low for 2017/18, we expect this to increase annually as the appropriate recording mechanisms are put in place. It is clear, nonetheless, that advice services make a substantial positive impact on the health and wellbeing, capacity, and financial resilience of the significant numbers of people who contact them. A separate briefing paper providing more detailed information on the approaches taken has been produced.¹

1 http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/money_advice/measuring-softer-outcomes.pdf

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